

# W5YI

National Volunteer Examiner Coordinator

## REPORT

Up to the minute news from the world of amateur radio, personal computing and emerging electronics. While no guarantee is made, information is from sources we believe to be reliable. May be reproduced providing credit is given to The W5YI Report.

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## WARC '92 Advisory Committee Selected

The various countries of the world enact and enforce the radio laws and regulations. Generally this regulation is performed within a framework of international agreements since radio waves do not respect national government borders. The *International Telecommunication Union* (ITU) is the governing body over worldwide telecommunications. More than 160 countries, including the United States, are members. In short, the ITU exists to promote telecommunications compatibility among the nations of the world.

The ITU (then the International Telegraph Union) was formed in 1865 to facilitate telegraphic communication between twenty different European countries. It was not uncommon back then for operators to simply hand messages to their counterparts at their national borders.

Telephone and radio communication were added to the ITU's activities in 1906 and the first ITU frequency allocations were made in 1927. In 1932, the name International Telecommunication Union was adopted to reflect the expanded responsibilities of the organization. In 1947, the ITU became a specialized agency of the United Nations, and its headquarters were moved from Berne to Geneva, Switzerland in 1948.

It controls international interference by its two primary functions, the allocation of the radio spectrum to the various radio services and the registration of fixed frequencies. Its no accident that, for the most

part, all countries have their ham bands on the same spectrum or that they are harmonically related to each other; 1.8, 3.5, 7, 14, 21, 28 MHz. and so forth. The belief back then was any harmonic interference would simply be radiated in another ham band. "Let them stew in their own juice"; the 1927 thinking.

By international agreement, the first characters of the call sign indicate the country in which the station is authorized to operate. The ITU allocation plan divides the world into three geographical regions. Our hemisphere is in Region 2.

It is our FCC (non-government) and *National Telecommunications and Information Administration* (government) that further assigns specific radio frequencies taking into consideration the international telecommunication agreements. The NTIA is the President's principal adviser on telecommunications policy.

The last major revision of radio spectrum assignments was held in 1979 where the amateur community generally fared well. The next significant *World Administrative Radio Conference* is scheduled for 1992 in Spain. Its importance to the amateur community while less than 1979, is truly profound!

The microwave frequencies have skyrocketed to importance in worldwide communications. The uncertainty of bouncing signals off of the heavens has given way to predictable satellite communication.



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While WARC 1979 considered the entire radio spectrum, WARC-92 will zero in on the 500 MHz to 3 GHz range and consider proposals involving short-wave broadcasting.

The 7100 to 7300 kHz 40 meter ham segment is allocated to shortwave broadcasting in all other parts of the world. Only the 7000 to 7100 kHz slice is allocated to the Amateur Service worldwide. What pressure will be exerted to remove the Region 2 Amateur from this spectrum to make room for more U.S. shortwave ...and less interference to existing foreign broadcasting? Consideration of other frequency bands are also on the agenda along with proposals for high-definition television by satellite.

Last week, FCC Chairman Alfred Sikes announced the names of a thirty-seven member WARC '92 *Advisory Panel*. The committee will make recommendations for U.S. proposals and positions to be taken at the conference. The panel is headed up by FCC Commissioner Sherrie Marshall and Francis Urbany, director, International and Agency Relations of the BellSouth Corporation.

Most telecommunication associations and many large electronic corporations have representatives on the Advisory Committee. Among those are organizations representing radio/television/satellite broadcasters, the maritime and aeronautical services, and various telecommunication industry associations. One advisory panel member, communications lawyer Albert Halprin, is the husband of NTIA head, Janice Obuchowski.

The NAB (*National Association of Broadcasters*) is already on record as opposing the establishment of "wide RF" satellite broadcasting services. They are particularly concerned about the future of UHF-TV spectrum - much of which is unused - and direct-to-home satellite TV and audio broadcasting. There can be little doubt that the future of global communications and broadcasting in the 1990's and beyond will be decided in Spain at WARC '92.

**Dave Sumner/K1ZZ**, Executive Vice President of the American Radio Relay League, was appointed to represent U.S. amateur radio interests. Several lawyers, educators and corporations (among them Motorola, McCaw Cellular, GTE Mobile Communications, Hughes Communications, AT&T and others) also sit on the panel. The Canadian DOC also is creating a Government/Industry Working Group to prepare for WARC '92.

## DOVE CRISIS AVERTED!

On Wednesday March 14, AMSAT learned that the DOVE Microsat on-board computer (OBC) had crashed. Only a carrier with minimal packet data was being sent on the 145.825 MHz general downlink. The DOVE transmitter was in a key-down condition, blocking the uplink command channel. The software crash inhibited the normal on/off cycling of the transmitter.

The problem was solved March 17 with the help of Microsat guru **Bob McGwier/N4HY** and **Dave Blaschke/W5UN**. Blaschke owns what is believed to be the world's largest private 2 M antenna, which he uses for moonbounce operation. W5UN transmitted a reset command sequence to DOVE, using this 32.5 dBi array which provided nearly 2 MW (that's MegaWatts) of EIRP.

With some careful timing, intended to restore control of the spacecraft at the optimum time in the battery cycle, AMSAT members corrected the problem and commanded on the S-band transmitter. Telemetry from the S-band downlink will be analyzed for clues that might help in understanding the circumstances surrounding the software crash. DOVE controllers advise that the 145.825 transmitter will be off the air until new software can be loaded. (Tnx N4HY, NK6K)

## RED CROSS REQUESTS 220 SPECTRUM

Although it continues to object to the way in which the FCC reallocated 220-222 MHz to commercial use from amateurs, the American Red Cross (ARC) in Washington has asked for four or five channels from the reallocated band for its exclusive use. Prime mover behind the request is **Michael Riley/KX1B**, the recently appointed ARC Disaster Communications Associate and official in charge of all ARC emergency radio communications.

Riley endured a harrowing introduction to his new job when he was sent to manage communications in the islands during Hurricane Hugo. His request -- filed as comments in PR Docket 89-522, the 220 bandplan and rules NPRM -- says that the Hugo experience "dramatically revealed" the inability of ARC to communicate in disasters using the current system, which is based on the single nationwide frequency of 47.42 MHz.

"Through the Red Cross had marginally adequate long-haul communications to Puerto Rico and the

"I am a currently licensed Extra Class amateur radio operator and wish to be a volunteer examiner. I have never had my station or

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mainland United States, a lack of reliable, on-site communications hindered the Red Cross in the performance of its Federally mandated role of disaster relief," ARC told the FCC. "Once long distance inbound information was received from the United States (much of which was time-sensitive), the information could not be disseminated to the numerous shelters, storage facilities and personnel in transit throughout the island [St. Croix] in more than 40 vehicles."

The ARC says that Amateur Radio is necessary but not alone sufficient for this communication: "Shelter administration, other administrative concerns, damage assessment, logistics in the affected areas, coordination of transportation of personnel, and numerous incidental communications require several national, dedicated VHF or UHF channels for Red Cross use in addition to 47.42 MHz."

Unlike the 47.42 MHz frequency -- which is strictly limited by the FCC to disasters and tests -- the Red Cross would be able to conduct its regular business operations on the 220 MHz frequencies.

We won't predict how well the ARC will fare in its request. Traditional mobile organizations are trying hard to keep the PELTS system out of the 220-222 MHz spectrum (see PELTS story, this issue). But PELTS is intended for general public "personal communications", a concept to which most private radio interests have long objected. The ARC request, on the other hand, is by a well-recognized organization with a substantial public role and budget with which to buy radios if its allocation is approved.

## REACTIONS TO NO-CODE COMING IN

Even though comments aren't due until August, tuning around the FCC turned up some early signals from the amateur community on the no-code issue. Some amateurs are obviously wasting no time in letting the Commission know what they think about the Communicator Class license proposal in PR Docket 90-55. Here are excerpts:

"I believe that the time has come for a codeless license class. Although my experience indicates that the Morse code is not a significant barrier to entry, it is perceived to be such by many non-hams, and hams as well, and this perception has created a true need for the license. ...The proposal would also encourage development of the 220 MHz band, especially packet usage. Currently most packet activity on

220 MHz is 'backbone' forwarding of messages. Making 220 MHz the primary band for Communicator packet radio would encourage this development." - Mark Forbes/KC9C, Rocklin CA

"The establishment of the Communicator License Class is long overdue. In my opinion, the maintenance of five classes of hobby license is not a justifiable expense in this day of tight money. Indeed, there is much to be said for a return to the period before 1963 when the FCC issued only Novice, Technician and General Class licenses. In general, the Morse code requirement for any class of amateur license beyond the treaty obligation is of dubious value to the taxpayer and the Government." - Sheffield Wilds/W4GVD, Pensacola FL

"The whole reason for my pursuit of the amateur radio class was to escape the garbage which thrives on Citizens Band radio. Do you people realize what will become of the amateur frequencies if this no-code proposal reaches its full potential? The same conditions will exist on ham bands. ...Please reconsider this proposal." - Mitch Mashburn, Resace GA

"The importance of these [2 and 6 meter] bands to the National Traffic System, all the local and national Emergency Communications Systems, the various other emergency situations such as local disasters, road reports and other community services we use these bands for cannot be underestimated. It is of paramount importance to the safety of lives and property not to allow unqualified, untrained, inexperienced, undisciplined operators instant access to 2 and 6 meters." - Calvin Burt/KA0DFN, Ashland OR

"There is absolutely no room left on the VHF bands for a sudden influx of instant amateurs. Such an invasion would immediately destroy the current capabilities in providing public service on those bands. ...The proposed rules would immediately result in an avalanche of applicants from those who desire to be instant hams rather than unlicensed CB's, make no mistake about it. There is currently no amount of equipment in the pipeline that would satisfy the needs of such a large group. Manufacturers would have a seller's paradise, and the prices would go out of sight." - Gerald Murphy/K8YUW, Lakewood OH

"This new class has the potential to greatly encourage today's youth to pursue careers in electronics and related fields. Its very nature encourages the study and research of topics which will be of benefit

instructions on how to administer Novice  
...and Technician - Extra Class tests.

P.O. Box #565101  
Dallas, TX 75356

GUARANTEED  
OR MONEY BACK

want to know about amateur radio license tests, amateurs  
wishing to upgrade ...even volunteer examiners administering  
tests under the Novice and VE/VEC System. Over 300 pages!



to the individual, and potentially reap immense gains for this country's technology. ...If the new licensees are denied access to the 2 meter and 75 cm bands, they will, in effect, be ostracized by the current hams, and have minimal contact with hams of other levels." - *Paul Brooks/WB6MKS, Folsom CA*

"Hundreds of thousands of amateurs throughout the history of Amateur Radio, including those with severe physical disabilities, have demonstrated time and time again that if they desire their license enough, they will learn Code and will pass their test. I implore you to vote against PR Docket 90-55 when it comes due, and I further ask that you ensure that this type of proposal never comes into being again." - *Alan Kaiser/N1API, Meriden CT*

"I can see no reason why they should be denied full access to the 6 M and 2 M bands. Although there has been indeed almost explosive growth in the number of stations in repeater operation in these bands, the number of users per repeater system is declining. Why? Because with so many new repeaters available, there is plenty of room for more users. ...Our repeater resources are underutilized. These new licensees are needed to populate these frequencies and repeaters in the 2 M band." - *Joseph Eisenberg/WA0WRI, Lincoln NE*

## ARRL PREZ KEEPS UP 220 CAMPAIGN

The FCC may believe they've made their "final" decision in Docket 87-14 to reallocate 220-222 MHz -- but amateurs around the country have kept up the fight by continuing to write letters to their representatives in Congress to complain of the FCC action. More letters come in every week.

The Congressional staffs forward these letters to the FCC. The Commission in turn forwards them to the office of Chief Engineer Tom Stanley. Mr. Stanley's office then forwards a response back to the Congressman or Senator, who forwards the letter back to the ham. We thought that the ARRL might grow tired of this process -- and the FCC's stock answers -- but League President **Dr. Larry Price/W4RA** is giving it another go. He recently wrote Senate Armed Services Committee chairman Sam Nunn (D-GA) with these words:

"The federally licensed radio amateurs need your assistance One More Time. ...I believe you have been filled in on the problems that amateur radio

operators have had over the last three years with the FCC.

"These problems center on the blind determination of the FCC to displace new radio technology being developed by amateurs, high-speed packet data transmissions, from the 220-222 MHz band in favor of making room for an unproved technology (ACSSB) to be used by the Land Mobile Radio Service.

"I write you in my capacity as the volunteer president of the national organization that represents amateurs' interests, we have been directed to try every channel to reverse the unwise decision of the FCC. Of the nearly half-million radio amateurs in the nation, several thousand fellow Georgians also join in urging that you assist us.

"Senator, the Secretary of Defense (on behalf of the National Communications System) has repeatedly urged retention of the frequencies 220-222 MHz by the Amateur Service in support of the National Security Emergency Preparedness program. It seems fitting and proper, therefore, if the Armed Services Committee of the Senate could look into this problem and schedule hearings or initiate legislative relief. Your support in this vital matter will be very much appreciated."

FCC Chief Engineer Stanley's response is detailed. Unfortunately, space does not permit us to print all of it here, but here are some excerpts:

"The Commission fully considered the impact the allocation would have on the amateurs' ability to provide emergency communications. The Commission concluded that the amateurs will have ample spectrum to provide emergency communications. Amateurs have designated more than 600 channels for repeater operations in six amateur frequency bands between 50 MHz and 1300 MHz.

"These channels support over 10,000 actual repeater operations. These channels were untouched by the Commission's action here. In addition, there are hundreds of other channels in these bands used for non-repeater operation, as well as other amateur frequency bands below 30 MHz that may be used for emergency communications. ...

"The period for reconsidering the Commission's decisions in Gen. Docket 87-14 expired last October without anyone requesting further reconsideration.



The Commission's decision is currently on appeal to the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. ...

"We are strongly supportive of the amateur radio service and will continue to ensure that its allocation requirements are met, as we believe we have in this instance."

## **VOICE CONTROLLED TYPEWRITER!**

The Associated Press distributed an interesting writeup last week about a new, voice-activated "typewriter," which promises to boost productivity and open a world of opportunity for the handicapped.

The **DragonDictate Voice-Typewriter** consists of software and a speech-recognition circuit board for personal computers. It allows users to create memos, manuscripts and other documents by speaking instead of typing. Users speak into a microphone and see text appear on a video screen at the rate of 35 words a minute.

The \$9,000 system can recognize 30,000 words and adapt itself to individual speakers. Until now, voice-activated systems had not been able to recognize more than 5,000 words. The commands are simple. To turn off the system, one says, "Voice Console: Go to Sleep." To turn it on, the command is "Voice Console: Wake Up." A mistake is corrected by saying "oops" and repeating the correct word. Many functions can be operated manually as well.

The system is designed for professionals who don't type well or who want to write reports and letters that otherwise would be dictated to a secretary, then transcribed. DragonDictate is also seen as a great boon to the disabled.

The system adjusts to each user's voice and vocabulary because individual voices can vary widely. DragonDictate is compatible with an IBM personal computer with a 386 microprocessor.

## **PELTS NEEDS RESCUE AT FCC**

The concept of a new personal radio service for use in the outdoors is struggling for acceptance. That's our conclusion after examining comments filed in response to the NPRM in PR Docket 89-599, which would create a Personal Emergency Locator Transmitter Service (PELTS). This service would use

spectrum "reclaimed" from the 220-222 MHz reallocated by the FCC from amateur use to commercial/government uses.

PELTS would allow rescuers to track your beacon to your location if you were lost or injured in the wilderness. The PELTS radio would be a marvel, if all of the features that the FCC proposed were included. It would use amplitude companded single side-band (ACSB) -- a modulation method about which one commenter said, "if its time ever came, it has long since gone."

PELTS would include channels for emergency homing, local information broadcasts and two-way voice communication. It would be water- and drop-proof, consumer-priced and small enough to fit in a pocket or backpack. Licenses would be held by local public-service teams only.

Conspicuously missing from the piles of PELTS comments are any from people who would actually use the product, such as wilderness groups, hikers, campers or climbing clubs. Unlike the FCC of the '70s, today's cash-strapped Commission no longer conducts "outreach" to communicate with potential users of new services it proposes.

Some organizations such as the Personal Radio Steering Group, REACT and the Associated Public Safety Communications Officers favored the service. Two manufacturers favored a whittled-down PELTS system. Other comments came from land mobile associations and rescue teams who rejected PELTS as too complicated or improbable.

The original petitioner, **Ken Seymour/KA7OSM** of Oregon, said that "it's likely PELTS will never get off the ground due to the initial complexity and objections from large corporate entities who have their eye on this piece of spectrum. For them, relinquishing 1 MHz for a beneficial use such as this will be a fight." He recommended a simpler system.

As predicted, the chief "naysayer" was United Parcel Service. UPS filed an elaborate 30-page attack. The company argued that PELTS would "inevitably be used for personal communications," causing interference to commercial operations in the 220 band. This would then "undermine the important national objective" of promoting "narrowband technologies". (We question whether the ACSB modulation to be implemented at 220 will have much applicability to other spectrum.)



The ARRL reminded the FCC that the reallocation of 220-222 is not final. The ARRL's appeal of the FCC's action is still pending, with no date having been set for filing briefs or oral argument. ARRL suggested that PELTS or a similar emergency beacon be placed in the General Mobile Radio Service band at 460 MHz. UPS and the Personal Radio Steering Group made similar suggestions.

We think that if the PELTS survives at all, it will be in the form of a non-voice emergency beacon operating on a single frequency. Such a system known as the Mount Hood Locator Unit is now operating under an experimental license at Mount Hood, Oregon. It is not available elsewhere. Whether UPS and the mobile radio industry would allow even a single channel for this safety use nationwide remains to be seen. Reply comments on PR Docket 89-599 are due April 19.

## **MORE ON THE HF RADAR WOODPECKERS**

In our last issue we mentioned that the U.S. Government would be deploying three new Relocatable Over-the-Horizon Radar (ROTHR) transmitters in 1992. Two of these systems will be operated from Guam in the Northern Mariana Islands and the state of Virginia - the site of the third system is not known.

Not much has been said about the Virginia site, but at least one amateur, **Leonard Kaufer, KH0AC**, a Ph.D. professor at Northern Marianas College, Saipan, is waging a one man battle to get the Guam project scrapped. He maintains it is too dangerous to the people of Saipan.

The installation will consist of three high frequency transmitters sweeping the spectrum from 5 to 28 MHz on Tinian Island ...and three receivers on Guam to detect, track and analyze aircraft or ships coming from beyond the horizon. Each transmitter is capable of 200 kilowatts.

Kaufer says considering the high gain directional antennas, the result will be millions of watts of high frequency electromagnetic energy bombarding Saipan from Tinian Island (three miles to the south) twenty-four hours a day, week in and week out.

A Dept. of the Navy EIS (*Environmental Impact Statement*) declares that little information is known about the hazards of high frequency RFEMR, radio frequency electromagnetic radiation. "Currently much work is being done to deal with these

developing issues but little in the way of international consensus has so far emerged," it proclaims. The Coalition of Concerned Citizens feels that the radar installation should not be built until it is proved harmless to the people of Saipan who "...live in the bore-sight -- 'right down the barrel' -- of the proposed installation."

Kaufer also questions the objectivity of the U.S. Navy conducting the safety review on its own installation which is based on an admitted lack of biological safety information concerning the threat of electromagnetic radiation to human health.

A "radiation hazard exclusion fence" is to be constructed a thousand feet in front of the antennas around the 58 acre perimeter of the transmitter area, but Kaufer distrusts its effectiveness.

Although the Navy agreed in the EIS not to "...transmit on any frequencies in the 5-28 MHz band that are reserved for dedicated use by others (e.g. Ham radio bands, search and rescue, land and sea mobile, etc.) Kaufer is concerned about severe radio communications interference and receiver front-end overload.

A exhaustive report by Dr. Michael L. Kenney, (Special Assistant for Socioeconomic Planning, Office of the Governor/Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands,) concludes "There is a growing body of credible scientific evidence which indicates that in addition to the stipulated thermal effects, there are or may be potential carcinogenic, teratogenic and perhaps mutagenic effects from electromagnetic radiation."

Dr. Kenney said the 25 dbw gain radar antenna array at 28 MHz had an ERP (effective radiated power) of 63.2 million watts and although the beams are directed at an upward angle, the cone-shaped beams ...and the spread of the beams might expose the residents of Saipan to significant levels of electromagnetic radiation.

Kenney recommended in his report: (1.) that the U.S. Navy undertake a more extensive research study on the potential human health hazards of the electromagnetic radiation from the proposed Tinian radar transmitter site, (2.) minimize exposure, (3.) set conservative exposure standards ...and (4.) track the effect of the electromagnetic radiation on workers and the general population for the twenty-five year life of the project.



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## FEBRUARY VE PROGRAM STATISTICS

<u>February</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>1990</u>
<u>No. VEC's</u>	<u>*18</u>	<u>*18</u>	<u>*18</u>

<u>Testing Sessions</u>	<u>449</u>	<u>400</u>	<u>421</u>
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<u>VEC</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>1990</u>
ARRL	45.2%	40.8%	44.2%
W5YI	28.1	34.8	33.0
CAVEC	8.9	6.5	6.2
DeVry	5.6	6.0	3.6
Others	12.2	11.9	13.0

<u>Year-to-Date Sess:</u>	<u>702</u>	<u>754</u>	<u>883</u>
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<u>Elements Administ.</u>	<u>8391</u>	<u>7284</u>	<u>7371</u>
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<u>VEC</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>1990</u>
ARRL	50.7%	43.6%	48.1%
W5YI	24.8	28.7	27.1
CAVEC	7.3	7.1	7.2
DeVry	3.7	5.2	2.5
Others	13.5	15.4	15.1

<u>Year-to-Date Elem.</u>	<u>12800</u>	<u>12936</u>	<u>14700</u>
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<u>Applicants Tested</u>	<u>4817</u>	<u>4311</u>	<u>4336</u>
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<u>VEC</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>1990</u>
ARRL	46.8%	43.4%	47.4%
W5YI	24.0	29.1	27.5
CAVEC	6.9	6.7	6.6
DeVry	4.1	4.9	2.7
Others	18.2	15.9	15.8

<u>Year-to-Date Tested</u>	<u>7416</u>	<u>7624</u>	<u>8703</u>
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<u>February</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>1990</u>
Pass Rate - All	60.7%	61.7%	61.3%
Pass Rate - W5YI	53.5%	57.0%	55.8%
Applicants/Session	10.7	10.8	10.3
Appl./Session W5YI	10.9	9.0	8.9
Elements/Applicant	1.7	1.7	1.7
Sessions Per VEC	24.9*	22.2*	23.3*

### Administrative Errors by VE's/VEC's

<u>February</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>1990</u>
Defect. Applications	1.7%	0.4%	0.7%
Late Filed Sessions	7.4%	0.5%	0.7%
Defective Reports	1.6%	1.3%	0.5%

**\*Note:** The FCC previously considered ARRL, W5YI and DeVry to be 13 VEC's each since VEC's initially were appointed on a regional basis. Since any VEC may now coordinate examinations in any region, the FCC reduced the number of VEC Regions (62) to VEC Organizations (18). We have adjusted 1988 and 1989 figures to reflect this change.

[Source: Pers.Rad.Branch/FCC; Washington, D.C.]

## Of Interest to: VOLUNTEER EXAMINERS...

### A word of caution from the FCC

The VECs received a letter from **John B. Johnston, W3BE**, Chief of the FCC's Personal Radio Branch requesting that all VE's be reminded that they should carefully read the certification statement on the FCC Form 610 before signing it. The statement certifies that the examiner has administered and graded the amateur radio operator examination in accordance with §Part 97 of the Commission's Rules.

Section §97.509 requires each VE signing the certification to be present during the examination and must observe the examinee throughout the entire examination. The VE's who sign the certification are the only persons who are eligible to perform any step in the process of administering the examination to the applicant.

No administering VE may delegate any step in administering the examination to the applicant. "Signing the certification when, in fact, some or all of the administering VE functions are performed, by someone else constitutes falsification to the United States Government and is punishable by law."

### Current Form 610 Does NOT expire

We continue to get inquiries about the 12/31/89 expiration date on the current Amateur Radio Station/Operator Application FCC Form 610. Thinking that the 12/31 version can not be used, many amateurs and applicants are writing their VEC and the FCC for the new updated edition. Even though we have been told that a new revised application form will be forthcoming shortly, at present this is the only Form 610 that is available from the FCC. The previous form may be used indefinitely - even after the new application becomes available. In other words, disregard the 12/31/89 expiration date.

### Questionnaire on Communicator Class

As we mentioned in our February 15 W5YI Report, your author heads up a VEC committee (WCARS Ray Adams/N4BAQ and GLAARG R.C. Smith/W6RZA are the other members) looking into the impact of PR Docket 90-55 (no-code Communicator class proposal) on the VEC System. A recommendations report will be prepared for consideration by



the VEC's assembled at the **National Conference of Volunteer-Examiner Coordinators** scheduled for Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, on June 15th. A VEC position on qualifying for the Communicator class will be adopted at that time.

There are **major changes** affecting VE/VEC System testing.

- (1.) It is proposed that the Communicator class will fall under the 3-VE VEC System with expense reimbursement approved;
- (2.) the 2-VE Novice testing program would be abolished;
- (3.) additional questions (of unspecified content) would be developed by the *Question Pool Committee* (QPC);
- (4.) VEC accredited Advanced and Extra class VE's, but not the General class, may examine the code-free Communicator;
- (5.) the VE team would authorize Technician operation under CSCE (*Certificate of Successful Completion of Examination*) authority - examinees will ID with "/AC"; (no Technician class license would be issued by the FCC);
- (6.) a suggestion was made relative to allowing HF on-the-air Morse code practice/learning;
- (7.) U.S. law requires testing to relate to the privileges obtained;
- (8.) the NPRM asks for instructor, VE and VEC viewpoints on various examination/qualification issues.
- (9.) We were also interested in the impact of Morse code testing on the public and amateur groups -- such as the handicapped, elderly, our youth, computer, packet and satellite enthusiasts, and so forth.

Toward that end, a questionnaire was prepared by the Committee and sent out to VE's and VEC's. Since the ARRL is the major petitioner for the Communicator class, the ARRL-VEC manager (**Bart Jahnke/KB9NM**) told us that he would not be able to respond to the questionnaire. The only ARRL personnel authorized to comment on ...or establish League policy are the directors - which we understand.

Since our committee was faced with obtaining input from all examining groups *except the League examiners* (which represent the largest body of VE's), we sent several hundred of the questionnaires to ARRL examiners, their names taken from a computer list

of scheduled examinations. We really didn't feel the ARRL VE's were the same as League employees/personnel, and as such, were entitled to an opinion and input into committee considerations.

We also wrote the ARRL and asked for their general impressions on PR Docket 90-55, which contains the parameters and qualifications for a code-free amateur class, so that they might become a part of our deliberations. Our objective is, hopefully, to come up with some sort of 'middle-of-the road' compromise recommendation that might be acceptable to the majority.

ARRL General Counsel **Chris Imlay, N3AKD** has asked us to make it known that the League was not involved in the questionnaire construction, distribution or any other involvement. He also writes, "ARRL participation in the June 15 VEC meeting will be limited strictly to those matters directly related to its responsibilities as a VEC."

Although perhaps unscientifically prepared, the questionnaires are being returned to us ...and the responses are very interesting. We are in the process of recapping the responses and all input will be considered when a report is prepared by the committee. We will objectively cover the input we are receiving in our next issue.

We were not able to canvass VE's who participate in the present two VE Novice testing program because no list of Novice examiners exists. The committee is interested in learning

- (1.) how this VE segment feels about the testing proposals outlined in PR Docket 90-55;
- (2.) how it impacts your entry level ham classes and testing;
- (3.) How do you now obtain the appropriate testing information?
- (4.) How do you know when new questions are adopted or obsolete ones dropped by the QPC, especially in between routine question pool revisions?
- (5.) Is the coordination and oversight of the VEC System more credible than the two examiner Novice program?
- (6.) Do you feel it would be advantageous to be accredited by a VEC who would keep you updated with appropriate testing information?

Send your responses to: Recommendations Committee, P. O. Box #565101, Dallas, TX 75356.



■ **Interesting ham call sign system being considered in the United Kingdom!** The "G" by three-letter prefixes are running out in Great Britain and the DTI (Department of Trade and Industry, the UK's FCC) will begin using an "M" prefix followed by a letter indicating the operator's class. The number in the call will indicate the country. Thus if MA2AAA, a Class "A" licensed amateur moves to Scotland, he becomes MA3AAA. The proposed country numbers are: 2 England, 3 Scotland, 4 Wales, 5 Northern Ireland, 6 Isle of Man, 7 Jersey and 8 Guernsey. (1, 9 and 0 are not used.) While many ITU prefix lists don't show it, MAA through MZZ is assigned to Great Britain.

■ **Have you ever wondered why U.S. "A" amateur calls only go through "AL",** for example: AL7AB? The 1978 Amateur Call Sign Assignment System called for only the issuance of two letter AA-AL combinations. Even though the proceeding approved the use of the new single letter "N" prefixes for the first time, strangely, no single letter "A" prefixes were authorized. AA-AK (with one and two letter suffixes) were reserved only for Extra class amateurs -- unless you had an Alaskan mailing address (you did not have to actually live in Alaska.) AL7 by 1 letter went to Alaskan Extras; with AL7 by 2 letters initially being allocated to the Advanced class. Now all Alaskan Extra and Advanced amateurs get AL7 by 2 letters since all AL7's by one letter have been assigned. The AM through AO international prefixes are allocated to Spain, AP-AS to Pakistan, AT-AW to India, AX to Australia and AY-AZ to Argentina.

■ In response to an inquiry, a letter has been received by Congressman Jim McCrery from FCC Private Radio Bureau Chief **Ralph Haller (N4RH)**, Chief Private Radio Bureau) assuring missionaries, and anyone else in remote areas with no other means of commercial communications, that the interconnection of amateur stations with the public telephone system (phone-patching) is not prohibited. Banned is only the use of amateur radio to facilitate the business (charitable or commercial) affairs of any

party. There apparently seems to be some confusion on 14.313. Haller pointed out that the restrictions on international third party communications had recently been relaxed to permit messages on behalf of others who are eligible to be the control operator of the station - even in a country that does not allow such communications.

■ The reply comment period has been extended to April 20 on the **NTIA's Spectrum Notice of Inquiry.** (See last issue.) Remember these are replies and must refer to comments previously filed. Seven copies to Office of Policy Analysis and Development, NTIA, U.S. Department of Commerce, 14th St. and Constitution Ave., N.W., Room 4725, Washington, D.C. 20230. By the way, the Association of Maximum Service Telecasters (MST) told the NTIA that the authority for overseeing the federal government's use of the spectrum should be transferred from the NTIA to the FCC. MST said efficient government spectrum management was inherently lacking under NTIA procedures.

■ The Radio Society of Great Britain and the DTI (British FCC) are co-sponsoring the third annual **Young Amateur of the Year award.** A cash prize is offered to the outstanding "under 18 year old" who demonstrates outstanding individual achievement in one or more of the following areas: electronic home construction, using/gaining operating skills, community service, encouraging interest in amateur radio or involving amateur radio in a school scientific project. Closing date is 31 July, 1990. Winners will be announced at RSGB convention in September. Last year, 16-year old Ted Walker won for his antenna construction ability and involvement in club and emergency networks.

■ Rumors that the **Canadian Government is dropping their no-code** amateur license are just that. We received a rather official looking announcement from **Thomas C. Turner, VO1TV**, who according to his stationery, is Staff Solicitor of the Newfoundland Legal Aid Commission. He stated that Canada's

Department of Communications (DOC) would not be adopting a code-free ham license after all. We telephoned **Harry MacLean/VE3GRO** of the Canadian Radio Relay League, Inc., who immediately checked with DOC officials in Ottawa. His findings? Turner's media release is simply not true. While the dates for implementation of Canadian 'no-code' might slip a little due to more pressing issues than ham radio, nothing has changed.

■ **Telepoint**, the innovative one-way cordless service which allows users to access the telephone system from pocket handsets has gotten a big boost in Europe. Seven nations (UK, France, West Germany, Spain, Belgium, Finland and Portugal) have agreed on CAI (Common Air Interface) standards for "roaming" - that is enabling consumers to use their handsets in all participating countries and having their calls charged to their home or office. The seven countries aim to have Telepoint operational in all major cities, main railway stations and airports by 1993. By the end of 1990, however, it is expected that several thousand base "telepoints" will be installed in England operating in the 864-868 MHz band. The Telepoint base stations are run by entrepreneurs who connect the callers to the public telephone network. The handsets can also be used as residential cordless telephones. Another European messaging system in the development stage is ERMES; international paging relayed over the public telephone system to pocket-sized pagers. Commercial start-up due 1992.

■ By July 1, all cable operators must comply with stringent FCC cable TV leakage standards that limit leakage to 10 microvolts per meter at 450 meters. Leaks come from many sources including loose fittings and damaged coaxial cable. A novel system for identifying cable leaks uses small aircraft flying at 1,500 feet armed with mapping software recording the precise latitude and longitude of unacceptable leakage. The coordinates and leakage readings are then overlayed on a street map. Skytrek charges \$8,250 to quickly analyze 1,000 miles of cable.



## PIRATE RADIO STATION SHUT DOWN!

U.S. Marshals and FCC investigators once again closed down a Seldon, NY, unlicensed broadcast station which operated on 87.9 FM from a single family residence at 33 Roslyn Avenue. The equipment of "WQNR" was confiscated under Federal forfeiture provisions initiated by the U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of New York, Andrew Maloney.

The clandestine broadcaster billed itself as "Long Island's Rock and Roll Capital" and played rock and roll music. In April, 1986, WQNR was shut down by the FCC and its operator paid a \$500 FCC fine for unlicensed operation. The WQNR seizure was the third time in recent months that a pirate broadcaster has been shut down in the New York area. Its operator faces a \$100,000 fine and one year in prison.

## FCC SEEKS COMMENTS ON PREEMPTION

The Commission has decided to accept public comment on the ARRL's *Request for Declaratory Ruling* on receiver laws. The League requested that the FCC preempt, on the basis of federal jurisdiction, state and local regulations that affect radio equipment that may be used by hams, particularly in vehicles but even in homes in some cases. The FCC made a similar preemption of state and local antenna restrictions in the decision known as PRB-1.

"Certain states have established statutes, and municipal entities have enacted ordinances, regulating or prohibiting the possession or installation in motor vehicles of radio receivers capable of reception of police, or other public safety communications," ARRL said. "These statutes have been applied against licensed radio amateurs to permit the seizure of FCC authorized equipment used, and intended for use by amateurs.

"It has also resulted in the arrest and prosecution of licensed amateur radio operators solely because the amateur possessed an amateur radio transceiver capable of receiving communications on frequencies allocated to other services in addition to amateur frequencies."

One amateur who is battling poorly-designed receiver regulations is **Emory Brown/KD2DN** of Jackson, N.J. Brown has been trying for years to operate a VHF amateur station in his car. KD2DN is not seeking to communicate with police departments, but merely to conduct normal ham operation.

New Jersey statute 2A:127-4 requires a special permit issued by county or local police authorities in order to have "...any radio receiver operative on frequencies which the Commission has assigned to fire, police, municipal or governmental entities."

Some VHF and UHF ham equipment extends receiving range into bands that may include governmental stations. Operating without the permit is a misdemeanor, and Brown has been denied a permit. The amateur complained to a local newspaper.

Jackson Director of Public Safety William Mulligan, in a letter to the newspaper, said that "While I must admit that ham operators such as Mr. Brown have proven themselves to be invaluable in certain community services, I feel that by allowing individuals the right to intercept and communicate messages to the Police Department or other emergency organizations would only cause problems for those agencies." He recommended that citizens use CBs and telephones instead, and asked KD2DN to remove his ham equipment from his car.

Brown appealed to the FCC for help in 1988. The Commission sent him a copy of a July 29, 1977 Public Notice titled "Local Laws Regulating Radio May Be Pre-Empted By the Communications Act." This notice points out that the Supremacy Clause of the Constitution permits the federal government to preempt local and state statutes when a local law conflicts with a law enacted by Congress, or when Congress has demonstrated that regulation in a given area will be conducted exclusively by the federal government.

The FCC said that although some local statutes may stand, federal law prevails over local regulations that conflict with the Commission's plan for radio services. For example, state laws may not require FCC licensees to refrain from activities required by the Communications Act.

Nevertheless, it appears that this 1977 *Notice* may not be enough to strike down the tide of laws that forbid legitimate licensees from operating their stations. A new preemption may be needed.

An original and two copies of your comments are due May 16, 1990 and replies are due May 31, 1990. Comments are not to be sent to the FCC Secretary, but to a special address: **ATTN: ARRL Declaratory Ruling Request, FCC, 2025 M St. N.W., Rm. 5322, Washington DC 20554.**